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USIB-D-16.2/29
18 April 1960

UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

Validity Study of NIE 61-56

Probable Developments in Burma

Published 10 April 1956

The attached validity study of NIE 61-56 was noted by the Intelligence Board on 12 April 1960 (USIB-M-91, Item 9.c.).



Executive Secretary

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Attachment

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1. NIE 61-56 was published four years ago at a time when Burma's large-scale aid and trade agreements with the Bloc and their potential as a means of increasing Bloc influence on Burma were matters of primary concern. Although the estimate emphasized the dangers inherent in the situation, it did not go overboard. It correctly pointed out that, for the shortrun, Burma's economic involvement would not be so great as to destroy its freedom of maneuver. For the longer run, the paper stated that the Bloc's success in exploiting its opportunity would depend upon the skill and restraint exercised in its relations with Burma and upon Burma's opportunity to dispose of its surplus rice in free world markets. In short, the paper was generally correct in its assessments of Burma's international orientation.

2. The paper did not foresee the 1958 split in the AFPFL, but did call attention to the personal frictions and differences on tactics among the key leaders and pointed out that these could become significant issues in the future. Likewise the estimate did not anticipate the army takeover of 1958 or the conditions which led to that action, including the development of the Communist-led National United Front. However, it did point out that sharp increases in Bloc influence might lead Kyaw Nyein and important army leaders to press U Nu for a change or even to remove him.

3. The paper has proven correct in estimating that national production and per capita consumption would increase steadily, and that economic conditions would not seriously affect political stability.

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